



ATO Field Restructuring

1. What are we doing?

The ATO is simplifying its structure and streamlining its support services. To do this, the ATO is restructuring the *nine* service areas that were established last year – three each in Terminal, En Route, and Technical Operations – into *three* ATO service areas: Eastern, Central, and Western. At the same time, the ATO is realigning the administrative and staff support services from the En Route, Terminal, and Technical Operations Service Units into shared service centers at the three service area office locations. The service centers will provide administrative and staff support services to the operational service units within each service area. Technical Operations will be restructuring its Engineering Services function in the nine FAA regional offices to increase the value of its services by reducing cost and increasing efficiency.

In addition, ATO is restructuring its three existing flight services areas into two service areas called Flight Services Information Areas.

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- ✓ Last year, ATO established nine service area offices: three for En Route and Oceanic Services, three for Terminal Services, and three for Technical Operations. During the initial startup phase, the three En Route and Oceanic Service Area Offices were located in the regional offices of the FAA's Northwest Mountain, Southwest, and Southern Regions. The three Terminal Service Area Offices were located in the Western-Pacific, Great Lakes, and Eastern Regional Offices. And, the three Technical Operations Service Areas were located in the Western-Pacific, Southwest, and Southern Regional Offices. Support for the service area offices was provided by ATO personnel located in FAA's nine regional offices.
- ✓ Under the restructuring, administrative and staff support functions from En Route and Oceanic, Terminal, and Technical Operations will be realigned into the three shared service centers. System Operations did not have administrative and staff support functions within the service unit and, therefore, requires no realignment.
- ✓ Each service center will support all of the service units for a given geographic area.
- ✓ The majority of Engineering Services positions will stay in their current locations and remain straight-lined to the Director of Technical Operations in their respective area.

- ✓ The functions of the Eastern Flight Services Area Office located in the New England Regional Office at Burlington, Massachusetts, will be assumed by the CONUS Flight Services Information Area Office located in the Central Regional Office at Kansas City, Missouri.
- ✓ The Flight Services positions located in the New England Regional Office will be realigned into the service center at the newly-designated ATO Eastern Service Area Office in the Southern Regional Office at College Park, Georgia.
- ✓ The Flight Services positions located in the New England Regional Office will be realigned into the service center at the newly-designated ATO Eastern Service Area Office in the Southern Regional Office at College Park, Georgia.

2. What are administrative and staff support services?

Administrative and staff support services include functions such as financial planning, acquisition and contracting, workforce services, quality assurance, requirements, program management, material management, system support, planning, airspace procedures, safety, emergency preparedness, and NAS technical evaluation.

3. Why is this change necessary?

Rising operating costs continue to reduce the funds available to invest in people, facilities, and modernization of our aging infrastructure. Meanwhile, the demand for ATO services is increasing just as tremendous pressure is being placed on the federal budget. We must change the way we operate to ensure that the ATO will have the fiscal viability to provide the services that our customers need and to take care of our employees. This restructuring will reduce duplication of effort while increasing efficiency, productivity, and consistency in the services we provide. It is the next important step in the transition of ATO to the performance-based organization called for by the Congress and our customers.

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- ✓ Centralizing administrative and staff support services will provide greater consistency across the ATO in support processes and procedures. It will improve services to field employees, facility management, headquarters, and our internal and external customers.
- ✓ Restructuring and realigning administrative and staff support services will standardize services provided, responsibilities, methods of service delivery, and metrics across the service areas. In parallel with achieving these goals, the administrative and staff support services in the service centers are linked to the process improvement goals of optimizing service availability, increasing productivity, and reducing the cost of operations.
- ✓ Restructuring Engineering Services in Technical Operations will reduce costs.

4. Where will the service area offices be located?

The FAA ATO Service Area Offices and their service centers will be located in the regional offices of the Southern, Southwest, and Northwest Mountain Regions. The two Flight Services Information Area Offices will be located in the regional offices of the Alaskan and Central Regions. The office in Anchorage will service the facilities in Alaska and the office in Kansas City will service the facilities in the continental United States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

5. Is the FAA closing regional offices?

This restructuring effort involves only the ATO and is limited to its administrative and staff support services. Most Engineering Services and other FAA organizations such as Flight Standards, Airports, and other mission-critical organizations remain distributed among the nine FAA regional offices.

6. How was the plan developed?

The ATO Transition Teams developed the area office restructuring plan over the last 15 months at the behest of the Executive Council. The plan is the culmination of many months of hard work conducting research, generating ideas, and identifying industry best practices. The teams evaluated suggestions, performed cost and organizational analysis, and developed structural designs. Over two hundred employees, with representatives from all of the line service units, contributed to this effort. Input from field and area office managers, the Executive Council, and the Booz-Allen-Hamilton process analysis was incorporated into the plan.

7. How is this different from a consolidation?

In a consolidation, you normally pull all the functions and people from one place and combine them in another. This is not an effort to close or consolidate any of the nine FAA regional offices or any of the air traffic control facilities that provide air traffic separation services. What we are doing is restructuring and reengineering ATO's administrative and staff support services to become more efficient, provide better service, and reduce costs.

8. What is a service center and why are we going to that structure?

A service center is an integrated set of shared administrative and staff support positions and resources organized into support groups: Administrative Services, System Support, Safety Assurance, Requirements, and Financial Services. The three ATO service centers will be collocated with the operational service units they support. The service center provides administrative and staff support services to Directors of Operations and their field managers, Managers of Tactical Operations, and Information Technology in accordance with service-level agreements.

This shared-services model offers the greatest value and long-term cost reductions to the ATO. It reduces overhead, eliminates redundancies, creates economies of scale, and allows for significant standardization of processes and procedures. It is a structure used by many organizations both in and out of

government.

9. Who will be affected and how?

All ATO employees now located in the nine regional offices will be affected to some degree. The organizational structure in which they work will change. Employees performing administrative and staff support services will be impacted more directly as their functions are being realigned into shared services groups that will make up the service center in each of the three newly-designated service area offices. Functions from each of the area office service units such as financial planning, acquisition and contracting, workforce services, quality assurance, requirements, program management, material management, system support, planning, airspace procedures, safety, emergency preparedness, and NAS technical evaluation will be transferred.

ATO employees performing administrative and staff support services who are located in the regional offices will be required to relocate with the transfer of their positions to the Eastern, Central, or Western Service Area Office. We anticipate that affected ATO employees will be relocated to the service center for the service area in which they are currently located.

Flight Services positions in the Alaskan and Central Regional Offices will not relocate. The Flight Services functions currently performed in the Eastern Flight Services Area Office will be realigned to the Flight Services Information Area Office in Kansas City. The associated positions, however, will be transferred to the service center for the newly- designated ATO Eastern Service Area Office.

Some positions within Engineering Services will be transferred to the new service centers. These positions will be primarily administrative and staff support, however, some engineering and program manager positions will be transferred as well. In addition, Technical Operations will be restructuring the Engineering Services functions in the nine regional offices to increase the value of services by reducing cost and increasing efficiency.

10. When will the change take place?

The ATO service area restructuring will begin with the announcement by the ATO Chief Operating Officer the week of December 5, 2005, and is expected to be completed within 12 to 18 months. Personnel relocations are expected to occur between June 2006 and December 2006. Most of the relocations are planned for the summer. Beginning December 6, 2005, members of the transition team will conduct briefings for ATO employees in all nine regions. The briefing materials and other information will also be posted on a special ATO Service Area Transition weblink on the ATO website (www.ato.faa.gov). A second set of briefings for ATO employees will be conducted in March/April 2006 by FAA Human Resource Management staff. This will be followed by the stand-up of the organization in April/May 2006.

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✓ The top leadership of the three service areas will be relocated to their respective area offices in the spring of 2006. The reporting structure of the staff

not located in the area offices will be aligned to the service center managers at the same time. Sequentially, as the area offices' space is reconfigured and process reengineering is completed, the positions in the shared service centers will be relocated into the area offices. The restructuring is intended to be complete by December 2006.

11. Will the new service area offices and service centers be in the regional offices in the three service area site locations?

Yes. The service area offices and service centers will be collocated in the regional offices of the Southern, Southwest and Northwest Mountain Regions.

12. Are we going to improve our work processes?

Yes. In January 2005, we began the analysis required to restructure the ATO service area offices and their associated workforce to improve cross-service unit coordination and to combine and effectively share resources. This set the stage for reengineering current business processes. A detailed examination of service area office administrative and staff support functions and a reengineering of business processes to operate efficiently within a shared service center concept began in November 2005. This effort will continue throughout Fiscal Year 2006 and beyond. The goals of the process redesign are to streamline the process, reduce touch points, and improve the efficiency of operations under the restructured organization. The ultimate result will be a standard set of business processes, executed uniformly in all service centers, that incorporates the best practices and expertise of both the suppliers and receivers of staff support services. The completion of process reengineering will enable the final development of performance metrics, the establishment of service level agreements, identification of job tools and IT requirements, and standardization.

13. What criteria were used to select the three service area locations?

The factors considered in choosing these locations were: (a) accessibility, (b) quality of life/demographic factors, and (c) agency costs.

14. Will we be offered buy-outs?

No. Buy-outs will not be offered. However, there are plans to offer Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) to employees in selected positions that will be identified prior to the end of the 2005 calendar year.

15. Will there be a Reduction in Force?

There are no plans for a reduction in force with this restructuring.

16. Will employees be required to relocate?

ATO employees performing administrative and staff support services who are located in the regional offices will be required to relocate with the transfer of their positions to the Southern, Southwest, or Northwest Mountain Regional Offices. Flight Services personnel in the Alaskan and Central Regional offices will not relocate. The positions being transferred to the service centers include

functions from each of the area office service units, such as financial planning, acquisition and contracting, workforce services, quality assurance, requirements, program management, material management, system support, planning, airspace procedures, safety, and emergency preparedness. Employees relocated due to this restructuring will receive permanent change-of-station (PCS) benefits in accordance with agency travel regulations and negotiated agreements.

17. Will employees in the Flight Services offices be allowed to transfer to the service centers?

Employees may use established procedures to request alternate assignments for which they are qualified. Requests will be considered and accommodated when possible, based on the ATO's needs. The Flight Services staff located in the New England Regional Office will be realigned into the service center at the newly-designated ATO Eastern Service Area Office located in the Southern Regional Office at College Park, Georgia.

18. Will I have the same job I have now after restructuring?

Administrative and staff support services employees will be reassigned to comparable positions for which they are qualified in their respective designated service centers with no loss in base pay. Most employees will be performing the same duties.

19. Will I have to compete for my job?

Managerial positions will be filled through a combination of competitive process and administrative reassignments. Administrative and staff support services employees will be reassigned to comparable positions for which they are qualified in their respective designated service area offices.

20. Will ATO pay PCS for those of us who have to move?

Yes. PCS benefits will be provided in accordance with agency travel regulations and negotiated agreements.

21. How long can I stay in my present location if I choose not to go?

Employees who decline administrative reassignment will be subject to separation through established procedures. Additional information will be provided in the reassignment letter.

22. Will there be opportunities for people who want to try something different?

Employees may use established procedures to request alternate assignments for which they are qualified. Requests will be considered and accommodated based on the ATO's needs.

23. What if I want to go to Renton or College Park instead of Fort Worth?

There may be an opportunity to relocate to another location through the vacancy announcement process.

24. If locality pay in the new locations is lower, will base pay rates be adjusted to prevent employees from losing pay?

No. Employees will be compensated in accordance with agency rules and regulations. The restructuring will not affect an employee's base pay. Employees will receive locality pay as appropriate for their assigned duty station.

25. If an employee is placed in a lower-graded position, will grade and pay retention be offered?

No one will be administratively assigned to a lower graded position. If an employee applies for and accepts a lower graded position, the base pay will be set according to the pay rules applicable to the position accepted.

26. Will potentially impacted employees receive the same preferred placement as the AFSS employees?

No. This is not a reduction in force. Administrative and staff support services employees will be reassigned to comparable positions for which they are qualified in their respective designated service area offices. Managerial positions will be filled through a combination of competitive process and administrative reassignments.

27. Will retention or other bonuses be offered as an incentive for people to relocate to the three service area office locations?

No.

28. What are my options if I choose not to go?

ATO appreciates the quality and dedication of its experienced workforce. We hope everyone will accept the reassignments. For those employees who choose not to relocate, the options may include full retirement, early voluntary retirement, or discontinued service retirement, if eligible. Employees may also consider other employment within the FAA, other Federal agencies, the private sector, or they may decide to resign. Employees who decline the administrative reassignment will be subject to separation. Options will be explained in the reassignment letter.

29. What if I am willing to move but need to wait another six months or a year for health or family reasons?

We realize that relocating is going to be difficult for some employees. Each case will be different and we will work with employees to establish a reporting date that falls within the ATO's timeline for restructuring. However, all moves are expected to be completed by December 31, 2006.

30. Will employees eligible for retirement within five years have an option of remaining in the commuting area?

That is not an option unless the employee secures another position within the commuting area.

31. What will happen to employees straight-lined to headquarters prior to consolidation? (For example: Obstruction Evaluation Specialists in the Airspace Branch)

The area office restructuring will not affect employees reporting to directorates in headquarters.

32. Will more employees be straight-lined to headquarters prior to consolidation?

There are no plans to straight-line additional employees to headquarter directorates at this time.

33. Is this change related to the same organization transition that was started a couple of years ago?

Yes. The transition of the ATO into a performance-based organization is an evolving process that began in FAA headquarters with the streamlining of functions and the reduction of management layers. The restructuring of the service area offices is part of a planned phase of actions to make the ATO a more efficient, performance-based organization, positioned to provide better service to its customers at less cost.

34. Why was the ATO area office transition not implemented at the same time the creation of the ATO took place?

The ATO transition is one of the largest realignments ever undertaken by the federal government. It affects over 36,000 employees in more than 600 locations. A guiding principle is that the transition must proceed in a way that does not compromise the level of service we provide the public. To be successful, we had to go about the transition strategically and incrementally. The first step was the realignment and streamlining of Washington Headquarters functions nearly two years ago. The second step was the transition from the ATO's existing regional structure to the new ATO operating service areas. Once those operating service areas were operating smoothly, we were ready to take the next step –to restructure the nine geographic service areas into three service areas and to realign administrative and staff support services into those offices.

35. How is the ATO field transition different from previous FAA realignments?

Previous FAA initiatives to improve the delivery of air traffic services focused primarily on FAA Headquarters; usually at the top tiers of the organization and less on the field organizations responsible for everyday operations. The ATO headquarters realignment in 2004 created a flatter organization for greater

efficiency, improved coordination, and improved decision-making. The ATO Service Area Office transition continues this change process.

36. How will the ATO Service Area Office restructuring improve the delivery of air traffic services?

ATO administrative and staff support services provide direct support to air traffic control operations in terms of airspace and procedures regulations and guidance, quality assurance, installation of equipment, as well as hiring and training. The restructuring and realignment of the ATO support services will provide these services more efficiently and consistently, at a lower cost, using three shared service centers rather than nine area offices.

Centralizing administrative and staff support functions will reduce duplication of effort while increasing efficiency, productivity, and consistency in standardized processes. Greater consistency across the ATO in the support processes and procedures will improve services to field employees, facility management, headquarters, and our internal and external customers.

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✓ Since it is the service area offices that our customers work with everyday, and because the entire FAA is judged by the performance of these offices, it is paramount that our organization be efficient and productive not only in air traffic services, but also in the administrative and staff support services necessary to sustain our air traffic operations. The realignment of those functions is for the primary purpose of sustaining air traffic service operations.

37. When will benefits from the ATO field transition be visible?

The main benefits include cost reduction and consistency in providing administrative and staff support services. We currently operate nine different ways in nine different locations. The service area concept will allow us to reengineer and standardize processes, gaining both efficiencies and consistency of services. The cost reductions associated with the restructuring include those resulting from fewer service center positions than we have today. Customers will begin to quickly notice the benefits from consistency of service.

38. Was the service area office plan negotiated with the unions?

The unions representing unit members in the SAOs were notified of the plan in early December and will be afforded every opportunity to bargain where appropriate.